if 'drunken with wormwood?' With a sky but a little more bright and fiery, or a little more clouded, the plants of the earth would wither; with an atmosphere possessing a little more or a little less of the vital element, the living creatures would perish; and it would seem as if, with a little more or a little less suffering in the world, man would lead an existence now troubled and now prostrated, in the alternate violence and exhaustion of a fever.

Such facts seem to indicate what would have been the state of the world, if mankind, as a whole, had been placed nearer the one extreme or the other. In the actual world there is a check upon both these extremes, but a check effectual only because they are extremes. There are means, in the circumambient conductors, of allowing an escape to the dangerous power which may collect at either pole. The indolence and luxuriousness of the prosperous classes, as seen, for instance, in the courts of Eastern kings, has no vitality in it, and it putrefies like the vegetation of warmer climates. Again, the sterner evils which proceed from poverty, from discontent, and suffering, clash and fight till they destroy each other and disappear. The extremes thus contain their own checks within themselves—both are suicidal; while the mean is kept in a healthy state by the skilful counteractions of God's natural providence.

The conclusion is now forcing itself upon us, that virtue, so called, may be upheld fully as much by the providence of God as by the strength of any inherent principle within; and that this world is kept from inextricable confusion by a thousand minute arrangements—as the ocean is held in its bed by a boundary of particles of sand.

And what must be the character and condition of our race when these restraints are withdrawn, as they must be in the other world ? Some sensitive minds shrink from the very idea of a place of darkness to which the wicked are

consigned. But when the bad are separated from the good, and are under no restraint, we cannot conceive how there should be anything else than hopeless madness and violence. Men need only to be abandoned by God to create before the time a hell on this earth.

There may be a time corning in our world's history when, these restraints being removed, human wickedness shall reign without control; when the convulsions hitherto confined to